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In This Issue:

*Gov. Tulafono's
remarks at Toa o
Samoa SPC
Avealalo Milo's
funeral service
pg. 2*

*Gov. Togiola
Tulafono proclaims
Oct. 27, Make a
Difference Day
pg. 3*

*Historical Notes
pg. 3*

*Women and Youth
Initiative and
Brainstorming
Meeting
pg. 4*

*Arts Council's
Holiday Music
Festival
pg. 5*

*Togiola joins the
fight against
domestic violence
pg. 6*

*Fono spending
pg. 7*

*LBJ is smoke free
including parking
areas pg. 8*

*For additional
news,
information and
much, much
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Governor Togiola Tulafono honors Toa o Samoa SPC Avealalo Milo at funeral service

(UTULEI) – Governor Togiola Tulafono, on Friday, November 2nd, celebrated and honored the life of U.S. Army Specialist Avealalo Milo at the funeral service held at the Methodist Church in Fagaima, Tafuna.

SPC Avealalo Milo, 23, was killed in action on Thursday, October 4th while engaged with enemy forces in Bagdad, Iraq. It is the 15th casualty of a soldier of Samoan ancestry and 7th death in 2007.

Governor Togiola presented an American Samoa flag to Mr. Mareko Milo “so that it flies everyday next to the U.S. flag in remembrance of the great service of your son” and presented a special medal of service to SPC Avealalo Milo, which was presented to Mrs. Folola Milo, “for outstanding service to all of American Samoa through your son’s service in the US Army.”

Governor Togiola offered special remarks at the funeral service.

(See the full text of Governor Togiola's remarks on page 2)



Governor Togiola Tulafono's remarks at the funeral service of Toa o Samoa, SPC Avealalo Milo

“This is not a day of sadness. The tears shed is because of thanks and praise. And we give thanks and praise to God for the life of Toa o Samoa - Specialist Avealalo Milo. The pride of a big loving family, of a church, of a village, of our government, and of both American Samoa and Samoa.

We thank God for Avealalo Milo who made the sacrifice of his youth and his future in doing his duty so that the world can live in peace. God called Ave home while he was doing God's work for peace and freedom of the world.

To Specialist Avealalo Milo's parents, Mr. Mareko Milo and Mrs. Folola Milo, on behalf of the people and government of American Samoa, I wish to thank you for your son, and thank you for raising a good son, and for his dedication and commitment to serve in the long conflict in Iraq. What is for sure, your son has won. He is victorious. May God shower you with blessings as a family and restore the strength to comfort your hearts. I offer these words of comfort to you dear parents, to you Jocelyn, and the entire Milo family.

This is a day of victory. We come together today to celebrate and honor Avealalo Milo for his service to the United States of America and to American Samoa. We know it is necessary to celebrate, honor and remember because we must not forget. And we also know it is also difficult because the pain is never forgotten.

To Mrs. Jocelyn Milo, I know your time on earth with Ave was short, but the memories created by your union will be forever. We will not forget the sacrifice made by your husband. Ave's selflessness, honor, courage and commitment are highly respected virtues required of a good soldier. And we also say thank you to you. Now Ave's gone ahead and for all of us to meet up with him later. It is our prayer that God will fill the void in your heart and that He will fill it with love and memories of Ave, and that you continue on in your service to our nation in the Army and your commitment to serve in the Armed Forces and celebrate victoriously.

This is a day of victory. A soldier dies so that someone else may live. And at the end of this conflict, when the Iraqi people gain their freedom and live in a democratic society, they, too, as well as us, will remember that that freedom came at the expense of the life of Avealalo Milo and his brothers and sister in arms that have given their lives. We continue to also pray for those who continue to serve to complete the mission.

And I wish to express my sincere thank you to the parents of Toa o Samoa - American Samoa's other fallen heroes that are in attendance in solidarity and a show of comfort and compassion. You know this sense of loss. And we carry on.

We thank God for all our men and women in military service of our nation. Today is a day of victory for Avealalo Milo who gave his life so others can live happy and free.

Ia manuia lau malaga.”



Governor Togiola proclaimed October 27, 2007, Make A Difference Day

(UTULEI) - Governor Togiola Tulafono proclaimed Saturday, October 27th as Make A Difference Day in American Samoa.

Founded by USA Weekend Magazine and the Points of Light Foundation, Make A Difference Day is the largest national day of helping others and Governor Togiola says volunteerism play an important role in improving the Territory as an island community.

"In the spirit of the Good Samaritan we have hundreds volunteers who devote their time and energy to helping others, often behind the scene, and without recognition or request for compensation. Helping others is truly giving back to the community," said Governor Togiola. "This is a special day to reflect and gain a deeper understanding of the importance of volunteerism and its positive impact on our island home as well as show the thanks, the care and helpful spirit of American Samoa. Together we can make a difference."

PROCLAMATION

MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY – October 27, 2007

WHEREAS, serious social problems concern our Territory and threaten its future; and

WHEREAS, connecting with others and working together through volunteer service can bridge the differences that separate people and help solve serious social problems; and

WHEREAS, we have a tradition of philanthropy and volunteerism; of giving freely of our time and resources in service to our fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, millions of self-sacrificing individuals touched and enhanced the lives of millions on the ninth annual day of doing good by giving where there was a need, rebuilding what had been torn down, teaching where there was a desire to learn and inspiring those who had lost hope; and

WHEREAS, USA WEEKEND Magazine, The Points of Light Foundation and our local AmeriCorps have joined to promote an annual national day of doing good that celebrates and strengthens the spirit of volunteer service; and

WHEREAS, volunteer service is an investment in the future that we all must share.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, TOGIOLA T.A. TULAFONO, GOVERNOR OF AMERICAN SAMOA, do hereby proclaim October 27, 2007, as **Make A Difference Day** in the Territory of American Samoa, and urge all residents to observe this day by connecting with friends, fellow employees, relatives and with religious, school and civic groups to engage in projects benefiting their community.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto affixed my signature and Seal of my Office on this 23rd day of October in the year of our Lord thousand and seven.

Contact our local AmeriCorps office at 699-2285 for more information.

TOGIOLA T. A. TULAFONO
Governor of American Samoa

HISTORICAL NOTES

By: Stan Sorensen, Historian, Office of the Governor

On October 31, 1921, the public school at Vatia, American Samoa opened its doors to students.

On October 31, 1978, Public Law 95-556, which provided that the Territory of American Samoa be represented by a nonvoting Delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives, became law.

On October 31, 1988, the National Park of American Samoa was authorized by the US Congress. It was officially established in 1993 when a 50-year lease was signed.

On November 1, 1837, the London Missionary Society established its first mission on Ta'u, Manu'a.

On November 1, 1974, Peace Corps Group 15, composed of 77 volunteers (the largest Peace Corps group ever assigned to Western Samoa) arrived at Pago Pago International Airport on a Pan American Airways Boeing 707 at 4:20 a.m., en route to Faleolo Airport, Western Samoa.

On November 1, 2005, Polynesian Airlines' Boeing 737-800 twin-jet airliner, license no. 5W-5AO, lifted off from Faleolo International Airport for the last time, en route to Australia. "The farewell flypast marked the end of international jet services operated by Polynesian Airlines. Government-owned Polynesian Airlines now reverts to a domestic and inter-island turboprop airline. International jet services were taken over by the new Polynesian Blue joint venture...." despite a petition from Samoans and Tongans living in Hawaii asking Polynesian Airlines to continue their Honolulu-Apia flights, the Samoa carrier discontinued its weekly flights, now routing their passengers through Pago Pago for Hawaiian Airlines' twice weekly flights.

On November 1, 2005, despite a petition from Samoans and Tongans living in Hawaii asking Polynesian Airlines to continue their Honolulu-Apia flights, the Samoa carrier discontinued its weekly flights, now routing their passengers through Pago Pago for Hawaiian Airlines' twice weekly flights. **On November 2, 1909**, the first case of hookworm in American Samoa was discovered by Navy surgeon P.S. Rossiter (who later became Surgeon General of the Navy). Subsequent investigations revealed that 85 per cent of the Samoan population (including every member of the 72-man Fita Fita Guard) was infested with these parasites.

On November 3, 1920, American Samoa's 12th naval governor, Commander Warren Jay Terhune, committed suicide with a pistol in the bathroom of Government House, overlooking the entrance to Pago Pago Harbor. His body was discovered by Government House's cook, SDI First Class Felisiano Debid Ah-Chica, USN. "Some people believe Governor Terhune took his own life in 1920 in frustration over his inability to handle the *Manu*." His problems with the *Manu* began in 1919 when a group of Samoans returned from the U.S. mainland and wanted to go into the land development business. Terhune refused to grant them a permit, and they subsequently voiced criticism of him, both in the newspapers and through members of Congress who championed their cause.

(His ghost is rumored to walk about the grounds at night).

Local women gather to brainstorm on ways to revitalize traditional way of living

The Department of Youth and Women's Affairs hosted the "Women and Youth Initiative and Brainstorming Meeting" today in the DOC conference room where over a dozen local women were present to offer input on ways to revitalize traditional practices like sewing, weaving, cooking, and planting local trees that are used for such things.

The male group was represented in the meeting by two men.

YWA director Leiataua Leuga Turner headed the nearly 3-hour meeting which started with a prayer offered by Mrs. Tofiga Tufele.

Before discussions began, every woman was given a chance to introduce themselves. Most of those in attendance were retirees, nurses, and educators.

The two current sitting female lawmakers, Rep. Mary Lauagaia M. Taufete'e and Rep. Fiasili Puni E. Haleck rounded up the pool of participants which included representatives from six different villages across the territory.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss initiatives and brainstorm on ways to bring back the old days through methods and learned skills like sewing, which is a booming business mostly operated locally by Filipinos.

"If we learned how to sew our own clothes, we would save a lot of money," Leiataua stressed. She said that if Samoans, particularly women, learned how to sew and cook traditional food items, there would be no need to spend money.

She explained that Samoan people in the old days used to plant and grow their own food, thus alleviating the burden of having to buy it.

Basically, according to Leiataua, for everything that we are spending money on now-a-days, Samoans in ancient times were able to survive by learning how to live off of our natural resources.

For example, in modern times, the majority of people are seen buying beach mats at different stores when in fact, according to Leiataua, mats can be woven by hand at no cost.

The same thing applies to adornments like flower earpieces (*sei*) and bracelets (*taulima*).

For food, Leiataua said that there are many traditional Samoan foods that can be cooked and served without having to spend a lot of money. She referred to Samoan delicacies like *fa'ausi*, *pisua*, *sofe sofe*, *fai'ai*, and *ufi* – all of which are easy to make and cost nothing to produce.

Leiataua asked how the *pisua* was being cooked and one of the ladies said that as far as she knows, the traditional *masoa* isn't used but instead, substituted with tapioca bought from local stores.

Leiataua then asked Tofiga Tufele, whose husband is current Manu'a District Governor Tufele Li'amatua, to help promote the planting of things like *u'a* and *masoa* in the Manu'a Islands.

In addition, Leiataua also stressed the importance of planting other things like the *laufala*, *laupaogo*, and *lanie*.

Leiataua was more than ecstatic when told by Mrs. Meleane Savusa that there was a whole lot of *lanie* and *masoa* growing on a mountain near her home in Nuuuli. Savusa announced that anyone who wanted to take a look can come over for a tour.

With that revelation, Leiataua said, "There's lots of money to be made off of our natural resources. We just have to be open about it and work together."

The last agenda on the meeting was the concept of training older women to keep up-to-date with technology, through training them on the use of computers and working in groups to promote reading and writing.

"Go out and ask the business people in your community to help you get computer training," Leiataua told the ladies in attendance.

The meeting concluded with a luncheon and according to Leiataua, this is definitely not the last time meetings like this will be held. As a matter of fact, representatives from other villages are expected to be invited to a similar meeting to offer their input on the same issues.



◀ Ma'oputasi faipule Rep. Fiasili Haleck joined more than a dozen local women for the Women and Youth Initiative and Brainstorming Meeting held Oct. 25th.

Long time health care professional Mrs. Meri Time ▶ fills out a questionnaire that was handed out to every participant of the Women and Youth Initiative and Brainstorming Meeting



Togiola to the rescue - Mosooi cash prizes awarded

The Governor's Office has saved the territory from a lot of heat that could have escalated if the ASG hadn't stepped in to cover an embarrassing financial mishap during this year's Mosooi Rugby Tournament.

Thanks to Togiola, by Friday, October 26, all cash payments for the visiting teams from Samoa, as well as the trio of local teams that participated in this year's Mosooi Rugby Tournament were issued by the Governor's Office.

Each of the teams signed paperwork to acknowledge receipt of the cash and assigned the American Samoa Government the power to sue or collect payments from the sponsors and organizers of the rugby tournament.

The payments, totaling \$9,000 were made after some of the teams complained that they had not received the cash prizes as promised by the event organizers.

Prior to their departure, a total of \$6,500 was split amongst the three winning teams from neighboring Samoa - Championship Cup winners Vailele (\$3000), Magiagi (\$1500) and Nofoalii (\$2000), while \$2,500 was disbursed to three local teams: Pago Pago (\$1000), Fagatogo (\$1000), and Lalomalava (\$500).

The Rugby Tournament, a big attraction for the annual Mosooi festivities, was organized by the Fagatogo Blues and included the participation of 18 teams that were each required to pay a mandatory registration fee of \$400.

The fiasco involving the prize money is unclear but Fagatogo Blues President Leroy Lutu maintains that the sponsor, South Seas Distribution is responsible for prizes. But the Corona Beer Company says otherwise, claiming that they discontinued sponsorship of the tournament a month before Mosooi week.

Arts Council's Holiday Music Festival to be "more traditional"

The American Samoa Council on Arts, Culture, and Humanities will be sponsoring the annual Christmas Holiday Music Festival to be held at the Malaeoletalu Fagatogo Pavilion from December 16-18.

Registration for the event will take place November 9-15 at the Jean P. Hayden Museum compound in Fagatogo. Phone-in registrations will not be accepted.

Arts Council Executive Director Mrs. Leala Pili said that this year, they want the performances to be more traditional and therefore, they are discouraging the use of modern organs and pianos but instead, focusing in on the use of traditional musical instruments like the ukulele, kitara, and drum.

Performers that have possession of the *fagufagu* and the *lali* are welcomed to use those as well.

All registered participants will have to audition for a slot in order to perform, and those selected will have to attend a meeting where details like time limits will be ironed out before the final program schedule of performances are distributed.

The Music Festival can include Nativity scenes and Christmas plays, provided that the performers furnish their own props.

"We are inviting the public to come out and view this year's Music Festival to celebrate the birth of Christ and at the same time, promote the art of music," Leala said.

The week before the Music Festival, as has been the practice every year, employees of different departments and agencies of the American Samoa Government will be decked out in colorful uniforms as they perform Christmas songs, dances, and skits that focus in on the spirit of the holiday season.

The annual Holiday Music Festival is sponsored by the American Samoa Council on Arts, Culture, and Humanities, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts.

Approved DBAS loan applicants could receive checks as early as Nov. 10th

It will indeed be a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year for the score of local applicants whose loans will be approved by the Development Bank of American Samoa for holiday home repair and renovation purposes.

According to DBAS president Utu Abe Malae, the special Christmas home repair loan program is funded with money collected from loan repayments.

The program, which was announced last month, drew in a total of 52 interested applicants by the deadline date. About half of the applications have already been reviewed.

DBAS is making available \$200,000 to fund the program, and the maximum loan amount per applicant is \$10,000 for a maximum loan term of 84 months (7 years), with a fixed interest rate of 9.5%.

DBAS is expected to begin disbursing checks for approved loans as early as November 10th.

SHARE IMPORTANT INFORMATION & ACTIVITIES

with your ASG workforce as well as the citizens of American Samoa. Email your articles, announcements, pictures or other information to: Harry Stevens (harry.stevens@americansamoa.gov) or Vince Iuli (vince.iuli@americansamoa.gov)

Governor Togiola joins the fight against domestic violence

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month in the territory and at the forefront is Governor Togiola Tulafono who attended the opening kick off and offered remarks focused on prevention and early intervention to assist in curtailing uncontrolled anger that leads to violence in the home.

The event was coordinated by the American Samoa Coalition on Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and the Department of Human and Social Services (DHSS), and attendees included representatives from Mapusaga o Aiga (Family Haven) of Apia, Samoa, the American Samoa Coalition on Teen Pregnancy Prevention, American Samoa Community College, Baha'i Faith, Catholic Diocese of Samoa - Pago Pago, Catholic Social Services, Center for Families of Individuals with Developmental Disabilities, DOE's Drug-Free and Truancy programs, Criminal Justice Planning Agency, Kanana Fou Theological Seminary, DOH's Maternal Child Health and Rape Prevention programs, Methodist Church, Office of Samoan Affairs, DOC's Office of Tourism, Pago Pago Village Council, Teen Challenge Ministries, U'una'i Legal Services, DHSS's Victims of Crimes Advocacy and Prevention programs, and the YWCA chapters of American Samoa and Samoa.

In his remarks, Togiola said that Domestic Violence Month is a month to remind us "to look back, look forward, and look at what we've done in the past year."

He added, "We have addressed domestic violence in the home, in our village, in church and across the Territory, and we must continue to promote awareness until we completely stop the violence on our island, permanently."

According to the Governor, those who commit domestic violence know who they are and know that what they're doing is wrong.

"It is important for us to emphasize the need to explore the root of the problem," the Governor said, adding that in past, the local label or stereotype of a man who beats his wife is a '*fasi ava*,' – which is a label that will always remain with that person.

When asked about whether or not they have – at least once – experienced violence in the home, 29 out of 40 people interviewed replied affirmatively. This means that 73% percent of those interviewed have bore witness or fell victim to violence in the home.

The majority of the people interviewed said that violent outbursts in their cases were sparked from uncontrollable anger ignited by the influence of alcohol, while other said that alcohol wasn't a factor, as the culprit naturally possesses rage beyond control.

"The question is then: 'Why do men beat their wives?'" asked Governor Togiola. According to him, the two reasons why men beat their wives is to show strength and of course, the presence of a short fuse that leads to explosions of anger.

"The man wants to demonstrate his strength and control. The problem with this is, it reveals a man who instead, displays the qualities of a coward for not looking for another male to test his strength. Resorting to beating his wife who cannot fight back physically perhaps gives him control but then he also remains a coward," Togiola said.

"A short fuse as soon as you light it, blows up very quickly and this is the other cause for the violence we see around us. I believe that most of us sitting in here today are long fused, or have a long fuse, like me, it takes a while to blow up, if at all. If the fuse is extinguished then we do not have a violent situation," he added.

The Governor addressed the men and stressed to them that it is their duty to extend the length of their fuses.

"It would be ideal to have a very long fuse that when it burns there is a chance that it would be extinguished before the explosion," he explained.

Togiola referred back to a public service announcement from the military which recommends that before a person reacts with anger, they should sit quietly, with eyes closed, start counting slowly to ten. "When counting to ten, your voice is lowered and your anger has lowered as well, and you are in control of your anger," Togiola said. He added that after counting to ten and taking a deep breath, the person should try singing a verse of a hymn like "...ua soona olioli nei, lo'u loto ia Iesu."

(Continued on page 7)

Fight against domestic violence *(from page 6)*

According to him, some of the major causes and stressors creating misunderstandings, which often leads to violence in the home, stem from: (1) unmet financial demands (2) lack of communication and (3) not being satisfied with what you have and wanting other peoples things, like somebody else's wife, and then coming home and pick a fight with the wife.

But despite those reasons, Togiola believes that the main reason is uncontrolled anger.

"Spouse abuse is not only about women. I must add, although a small percentage and a minority, there are women who beat their husbands and particularly those in de-facto relationships. Violence that happens in your home is domestic violence whether it is spouse to spouse or parents to child. Domestic violence is domestic violence is domestic violence," said the Governor.

Of the 40 children interviewed, all but three said that they have been "spanked" at least once in their life. These so-called spankings were not just a slap on the wrist or a tap on the behind but rather, a spanking that included the use of harsh words, excessive force, and items like a belt, a shoe, a rolled up magazine, and a closed fist.

"It is our job to find ways to slow down and defuse and diffuse this anger so violence does not occur. For us parents, our Christian values and beliefs on spanking our children in order for them to do well in life may need to be looked at. There's a difference between a spank (*sasa*), and to beat (*fasi*). A *sasa*, or spank, is not a beating, but a *fasi*, or beating, is abuse. We use a *sasa* as a form of discipline and should be carried out with love (*alofa*) and never in anger (*ita*). Our duty as parents and carers is to watch how we are fulfilling these acts," Togiola remarked.

"In closing, again I say, it all comes down to our inability to control our anger, our inability to manage our anger. My challenge for 2007, as we launch October as National Month of Awareness on Domestic Violence, is for us all to become unified in finding a cure for anger. If we can manage anger and communicate with one another, we would get wonderful results. Spread the word in your village, in your church, in your work place, that when you are angry, count from 1 to 10 slowly, sing a hymn, pray or just breathe in deeply," the Governor continued.

He concluded, "I encourage the American Samoa Coalition on Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention, your partner agencies, and the Department of Human and Social Services to focus on prevention and early intervention. The cure for violence is not through punishment after the act. We must promote the freedom we continue to enjoy on our island to live our lives free from abuse, and to continue to live a safe and happy life within our families, our communities and starting from within our homes."

Fono overran budget but cut spending last month compared to same time last year

Last month, the Fono was scrambling to meet payroll and issue allowance checks for lawmakers using limited funds reshuffled from the operating budgets of other ASG departments and programs to cover their overrun. But surprisingly, the local Legislature actually decreased it spending compared to the same time in the last two years.

According to the Treasury Department's Monthly Financial Overview Report for local funds, in September 2007, the Fono expended a total of \$477,590, a big drop from the \$654,665 it spent in September 2006 and \$812,231 worth of recorded expenses in September 2005.

The House of Representatives led the way with \$177,728 in spending last month, followed closely by the Senate with \$164,494

The Legislative Reference Bureau expended \$69,163 while the Legislative Finance Office spent \$64,859

No money was spent on Fono repairs but rounding up the list were computer expenses that totaled \$1,347

The Treasury Department's Monthly Financial Overview Report pertains to local funds and details how much the American Samoa Government collected in revenue, how much was spent, the budgeted revenues and expenditures, and how each ASG department, agency, and other funding source(s) fared in collections versus expenditures for that month. (See separate articles printed earlier this month for full details).

The report was prepared by ASG Treasurer Velega Savali and submitted to Governor Togiola Tulafono.

New primary care clinic opens at the LBJ Medical Center

Patients visiting the Emergency Room at the LBJ Medical Center may be referred to the newly opened Primary Care Clinic, depending on the seriousness of their condition.

The new clinic is being overseen by former ER physician Dr. Matthew Davies who said that he will be seeing patients that require treatment with things like ear, nose, and throat problems, and those who are struck with a cold, the flu, and/or the sniffles.

“This is basically like family medicine,” Dr. Davies commented, adding that primary care clinics in other places of the world like the United States employ the most doctors.

Davies has compiled a list of criteria to determine whether or not the patient should be referred to primary care or remain in the Emergency Room.

Those who CANNOT be referred to primary care include patients with open wounds, and those who are in need or may feel like they are in need of an IV injection.

Walk-ins are welcomed, although appointments are recommended.

The new primary care clinic is located opposite the hallway from the LBJ Business Office.

As of today, Davies was still in the process of getting settled in, and he is temporarily working alone until a staff is hired

American Samoa Medical Center Authority extends smoking ban to include parking area

Smokers who want to light up or take a quick drag in or around the LBJ Medical Center compound beginning Nov. 1, 2007 will be asked to put it out or leave the premises.

Officials at the LBJ Medical Center say that the enforcement of the smoke free policy will be carried out in a professional and courteous manner.

When the smoke-free policy was in its beginning stages and announced earlier this year, the LBJ had prohibited smoking inside the hospital and in other areas except certain designated spots. However, beginning Nov. 1, smoking will be banned everywhere on the hospital premises, including any parking area that the LBJ Medical Center has authority over.

Anyone found to be violating this policy will be asked to depart the hospital grounds.

ASG RADIO PROGRAM

With: Governor Togiola Tulafono
Saturdays @ 7a.m.

On: Showers of Blessings - FM 104.7
Call 699-8123 or 699-8124